

LAHOMA

By JOHN
BRECKENRIDGE
ELLIS

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CHAPTER XV.

The Northern.

"Y, but I'm glad I've got you, Wilfred!" gasped Lahoma. "Oh, how they are dashing along! Listen how the man is lashing his whip over those four horses. Wish we could see 'em—must be grand tearing along at that rate!"

The stage was rapidly coming up abreast of them, and Wilfred felt her grasp tighten. There was a flash of lights, a glimpse of the driver's face as of crenated leather as he raised his whip above his head, then noise and cloud of dust passed on and the lights became trailing sparks that in a minute or two the wind seemed to blow out.

"My poor Brick!" Lahoma wailed. "Do you think he'll take good enough care of himself from what I wrote in my letters? But no, he doesn't think Red Kimball is coming yet, for I didn't know it till after I'd written. He's with Bill now, waiting for another letter. Or for a telegram."

"No, no, Lahoma," Wilfred tried to soothe her. "He has been hiding for days. Why should he come out just at the wrong time? You wrote that you'd not send any more messages. Brick will be on the lookout for Kimball. He is sure to be watching out for him."

"I know Brick," Lahoma protested, seemingly all at once overcome by the fatigues of her journey and the hopelessness of the situation. "I was afraid he wouldn't agree to hide at all, and just as soon as you came away and there wasn't any more prospects of letters, he'd get lonesome and tire of staying away from home. He's in that cave this minute, and he'll be there when Red Kimball takes the sheriff after him." Her voice quivered with distress.

"Don't be afraid, Lahoma," urged Wilfred, slipping his arm protectively about her. "Don't grieve. I'm sure Brick is in a safe place."

"Well, I'm not in danger," said Lahoma, withdrawing from his involuntary embrace. "Don't take me for Brick. Maybe you're right; but no, I'm sure he wouldn't be willing to stay out in the mountains week after week—and during these cold nights, for it is cold right now. We must hurry on, Wilfred."

"There's one comfort," said Wilfred as they retraced their way toward the trail. "Mr. Gledware won't appear as a witness against Brick. We'll get him cleared easy enough."

"But Mr. Gledware will appear against him, and he'll swear anything that Red Kimball wants."

"I thought he agreed to do that only on condition that a certain pin—"

"Yes, but Red Kimball brought him that pin just before I left!"

"Brought him the pin that the Indian had?"

"Yes, the pearl and onyx pin. And Mr. Gledware seemed to consider it so important that I know Red Feather would never have given it up while he had life."

"Then—"

Lahoma shuddered. "Yes. You see now what a fiend Red Kimball is. And you know now what a hold he has over Mr. Gledware—can make him testify in such a way as to ruin my poor Brick. If Brick knew this he'd understand how important it is to flee for his life and never, never let himself be taken. But he thinks nobody could get the better of Red Feather. You see, if he just dreamed what has happened he'd know Mr. Gledware can convict him."

"We must reach Brick Willock before Red Kimball gets his warrant!" exclaimed Wilfred desperately.

"Yes, we must—we must!" Lahoma was growing slightly hysterical. "I won't mind any hardship, any danger. But what are we to do? You won't let me ride on alone, and you wouldn't be willing to leave me here and take the good horse yourself."

"You're quite right about that," returned the young man promptly. "We can only mount again and go as fast as my miserable beast can travel, hoping for some chance to come our way. We have the advantage of not being in the stage, where Kimball could keep an eye on us."

"I ought to be more thankful for that than I am," Lahoma sighed. They mounted, but as they rode forward Wilfred's horse lagged more and more.

"It's slow sailing," Wilfred remarked, "but it will give us a chance to talk. By the way, do you feel ready for supper?" From his overcoat pocket he drew forth the sandwiches.

After they had eaten and the remaining sandwiches had been carefully stowed away in Wilfred's capacious pocket they pressed forward with renewed energy on the part of all save Wilfred's horse. By dint of constant urging it was kept going faster than a walk, though it was obsessed by a consuming desire to lie down. In order to keep Lahoma's mind from dwelling on their difficulties and on Brick's peril the young man maintained

A conversation at high pressure, ably seconded by his companion, who was anxious to show herself undaunted.

"During my long winters on my quarter section, nobody in sight—just the prairie and me—I studied out a good many things, just thinking about Oklahoma and—"

Lahoma said softly, "I knew there was something else you thought about."

"Yes!" exclaimed Wilfred, thrilled.

"Yes—there was something else?"

"A little girl, I guess," murmured Lahoma gently, with a touch of compassion in her tone.

"You've guessed it, Lahoma—yes, the dearest little girl in the world."

"I wish she could have cared for you—that way—like your voice sounds," murmured Lahoma.

"Maybe she can," Wilfred's voice grew firmer. "Yes—she must!"

"Have you found a gold mine?"

"What are you talking about, Lahoma? What has a gold mine to do with it?"

"Because nothing else goes," returned Lahoma decisively. "You might get single statehood for Oklahoma and write the constitution yourself and be elected governor, but you'd look just the same to Annabel, unless you had a gold mine."

Wilfred gave a jerk at his bridle. "Who's talking about Annabel?" he cried rather sharply. He had forgotten that there was an Annabel.

"Everybody is," returned Lahoma, somewhat sharply on her own account. "Everybody is, or ought to be!"

"I am not," retorted Wilfred, springing to the ground just in time—for his horse, on being checked, had promptly lain down.

"Then that's what you get!" remarked Lahoma severely, staring down at the dark blur on the trail which her imagination correctly interpreted as the horse stretched out on its side.

The wind increased in fury. Fortunately it was at their back. Wilfred pressed forward on foot, leading Lahoma's horse, and, partly on account of their unequal position, partly because of awkward reserve, no more was said for a long time. She bent forward to shelter her face from the stinging blast while he trod firmly and methodically on and on, braced slightly backward against the wind, which was like a hand pushing him forward.

The prospect of a snowstorm in the bleak lands of the Kiowa appalled him, but even while facing that possibility his mind was busy with Lahoma's attitude toward himself. Evidently it had never occurred to her that Annabel had vanished from his fancy years ago, now that she knew, she was displeased—most unreasonably so, he thought. Lahoma did not approve of Annabel. Why should she want him to remain passively under her yoke? Unconsciously his form stiffened in protest as he trudged forward. The wind, so far from showing signs of abatement, slightly increased, no longer with intervals of pause. The sleet changed rapidly first to snow, then to rain—then hail, snow and rain alternated, or descended simultaneously, always driven with cruel force by the relentless wind.

At last Lahoma shouted: "It's a regular norther! How're you getting along, Wilfred?"

Despite their discomfort, his heart leaped at this unexpected note of comradeship. Had she already forgiven him for not loving Annabel? "Oh, Lahoma!" he cried with sudden tenderness. "What will become of you?"

She returned gravely: "What will become of Brick? Norther's bad, but not so bad as some men. Red Kimball, for instance." A terrific blast shook the half frozen overcoat about her shoulders as if to snatch it away.

"Don't you wish the Indians built their villages closer to the trail? Ugh! Hadn't we better burrow a storm cellar in the sand? I feel awfully high up in the air."

"Poor Lahoma!"

"Believe I'll walk with you, Wilfred. I'm turning to a lady icicle."

"Do. I know it would warm you up—a little." His teeth showed an inclination to chatter. "Come! I'll help you down. Can you find my arm?"

At that moment the horse gave a violent lunge, then came to a standstill, quivering and snorting with fright. Wilfred's groping arm found the saddle empty.

"I didn't have to climb down," announced her uncertain voice from a distance. It came seemingly from the level of the plain.

"You've fallen—you are hurt!" he exclaimed. But he could not go to her, because the horse refused to budge from the spot, and he dared not loosen his hold.

"Well, I'm a little warmer anyway," Her voice approached slowly. "That was quick exercise. I didn't know I was going to do it till I was down. Lit on my feet anyhow. Why don't you come to meet me?"

"This miserable beast won't move a foot. Come and hold him, Lahoma, while I examine in front to find out what's scared him."

"All right. Where are you? Can you find my hand?"

"Can't I?" retorted Wilfred, clasping it in a tight grasp.

"Gracious, how wet we are!" she panted. "and blown about, and frozen."

"And scolded," he added plaintively.

"But, Wilfred, it never entered my mind that I was the little girl. Would I have brought up the subject if I had known the truth? I never would."

That's why I felt you took advantage. A man ought to bring up the subject himself, even if I am a girl out west and—"

"But Lahoma—"

"And not another word do I want you to say about it. Ever—at least, tonight. Please, Wilfred, so I can think about it. I'll hold the horse—you go and find out what's the matter."

"Besides, you said—you know you said, when we were strolling—that I didn't understand such matters. And that you'd tell me when it was time!"

"It's time now, Lahoma—time for you to be somebody's sweetheart—and you said—you know you said, when we were strolling—that I'd fill the bill for you."

"But I brought up the subject myself, and I mean to close it, right short off, for it's a man subject. Oh, how trembly this horse is!"

"But, Lahoma!"

"Well, what is it?"

"I just wanted to say your name."

He started away. "It sounds good to me."

"Yes, it stands for Oklahoma."

"It stands for much more than that!" he called.

"Yes," she persisted in misunderstanding him, "something big and grand."

"Not so big," he cried, now at some distance, "but what there's room for more than Brick and Bill in the cave!"

If she answered the wind drowned her words. With extended arms he groped along the trail with exceeding caution. Suddenly his foot touched an object which, on examination, proved to be a human body, a gaping wound in its breast.

"Found anything?" called Lahoma, her voice shivering.

He rose quickly and almost stumbled over another object. It was a second body, stiffened in death.

"I'll be there in a minute," he called, his voice grave and steady. After a brief pause he added: "I've found one of the horses. It's dead."

"Oh, oh!" she exclaimed. "They've driven it to death!"

Wilfred had found a bullet hole behind its ear, but he said nothing.

Suddenly the horse held by Lahoma gave a plunge, broke away and went galloping back over the trail they had traversed, pursued by Lahoma's cry of dismay. "I couldn't hold him!" she gasped. "He lifted me clear off the ground!"

Wilfred was also dismayed, but he preserved an accent of calm as he felt his way toward her, uttering encouragement for which their condition offered no foundation. But his forced cheerfulness suddenly changed to real congratulation when his extended hand struck against an upright wheel.

"Lahoma, here's the stagecoach. It's standing just as we saw it last, except for the horses."

"The stagecoach!" she marveled, coming toward him. "Oh, Wilfred! I see now what's happened. One of the horses dropped dead, and Red Kimball and his men jumped on the other three. But I wonder what became of the driver?"

"Get inside!" he ordered. "Thank God, we've found something that we can get inside of! That'll shelter us till morning anyway, and then we can determine what's to be done."

Once in the coach they were safe from the wind, and there was no help for the discomfort of soaking garments, but Wilfred lighted a reserve lantern and placed it in a corner, while thick leather cushions and stage blankets offered some prospect of rest.

As no plans could be formed until morning revealed their real plight, they agreed that all conversation should be foregone in order to recuperate from the hardships of the day for the trials of tomorrow, and Lahoma soon fell asleep.

(To be Continued)

Who ever makes the fewest people uneasy is the best bred in any company.—Dean Swift.

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5 No. Michigan Avenue, CHICAGO

INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

(By E. O. SELLERS, Acting Director of the Sunday School Course of the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago.)
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LESSON FOR JANUARY 9

THE COMING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

LESSON TEXT—Acts 2:1-13.

GOLDEN TEXT—Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you?—I Cor. 3:16 R. V.

Good teaching demands the use of the concrete; objective teaching is fundamental and essential. The incarnation is God's objective teaching. "God manifest." (a) to reveal himself, John 14:9; (b) to take away sin, I John 3:5; (c) to destroy the works of the devil, I John 3:8. So likewise Pentecost is a great objective lesson. This chapter has been divided as follows: (1) The Coming of Power (vv. 1-13). (2) The Empowered Witness (vv. 14-36). (3) A Powerful Result (vv. 37-47).

1. Power, 1-4. At the end of our last lesson the disciples were in prayer. The Lord's promise (1:5) was conditioned upon obedience. At last "the day" arrived (Lev. 23:15-21). Their hearts were fused and the fundamental requirement for service, the baptism of the spirit, came upon them. There has been no need since then to tarry any time at all to receive a like blessing. Lack of unity has much to do with our not receiving the spirit now and the consequent lack of power. Suddenly from out of heaven came a mighty sound (v. 2) and it is such a wind that the church needs today. There were three manifestations at this time and one other subsequently (see 2:44, 4:34, 35; 5:4). (1) Wind. Let us keep clear the difference between symbol and spirit. The manifestation was "as wind." Wind is mysterious, universal and mighty, but like Elijah on the mountain God is not alone as a mighty tempest. The sound filled the whole house. Wind is figurative of judgment (Jer. 22:22; Hos. 13:15) of the Spirit (John 3:8), also of heresy (Eph. 4:18). This last suggests the vagaries and imitations suggested or abetted by Satan to keep us from the truth. (2) Fire. This symbolizes power, light, heat and purifying, but the fire was not the spirit nor do we recall another such manifestation since (3) Tongues. The fire took the form of tongues which parted or portioned themselves out to "each one of them" though Peter is alone subsequently more prominent.

Every manifestation of the spirit is always that of some new power for Christ (I Cor. 14:12-13).

11. Perplexity, vv. 5-13. The question may arise, had the spirit been seen before? and the answer is "yes" (Matt. 3:16, Jno. 1:32). What then was new? The answer to this is the program of power. The first evidence of power was the gathering of the people (v. 6). The disciples at once testified to each of the sixteen classes mentioned (9-11) of the "mighty works of God." Not of the gift, but the giver, a different sort of testimony than that given by many who today profess to have the gift of tongues. The second result was an amazed people, "perplexed," for them as now the world cannot understand the spirit-filled man. These spirit-filled men forget self and were lost in their testimony (v. 11).

It is of interest to note that they did not even say much if anything about the spirit himself. Their testimony, for which many later gave their lives, was regarding God's mighty work of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead (vv. 24, 32).

The spirit-filled man is sure to emphasize this mighty work and the evidence of the spirit in a man's life is his loyalty to a crucified, risen and ascended Lord.

A third result was that people misunderstood and charged drunkenness, a fact seized upon by Paul to teach us the truth (Eph. 5:18). The only sure cure for intemperance, or any other evil, is an infilling of the holy spirit. The final and complete fulfillment of the prophecy (vv. 14-21, Joel 2:28, 29) of which Pentecost was a partial fulfillment will be in the "day of the Lord." But then, as now, all who call upon him shall be saved (v. 13, Rom. 10:13). "Some mocked," even as today ridicule or parody are the enemy's choicest weapons. Pentecost is an event well attested, that marked the ushering in of a new dispensation, that was misunderstood, but one that can be verified by experience.

Pentecost was a revelation, a manifestation of a new spiritual kingdom, distinctly Christian, that exposes sin and exalts the son.

Pentecost is a prophecy of real Christian unity, of a spiritual administration, of Christ's intercession and an evidence of an abiding presence.

When we are spirit-filled the Lord Jesus Christ will occupy the whole horizon of our experience, our testimony and will control our service. The spirit-filled servant can exclaim "The Lord (Jesus) is my shepherd," he is Lord, he is my shepherd; he is, not has been or will be, but he is my shepherd.

The gift of the spirit must not be confused with the spirit's "gifts" (I Cor. 12) whereby we are enabled to do the work he directs in order to glorify the son—not the church, nor man, nor a religious experience, but the Lord Jesus (Gal. 2:20, II Tim. 1:7).

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